

what a vast world of subjects for consideration we are surrounded. Any glance into the distance in quest of a limit found no limit to the diffused and endless multitude of subjects, though it would soon find one to the power of investigating and understanding them.

In these letters I shall revive some of the subjects which engaged and interested the social hour, and shall perhaps recall some of the hints or views that there presented themselves, in order to display them with greater amplitude and precision." When the *Essays* appeared they met with well-deserved success, a second edition being called for in about four months. The autumn and a great part of the winter of 1805 were devoted to their careful revision. The book that I published," he writes, to a correspondent at Dowlanend, "had at least five thousand faults: and two or three thousand I have felt it necessary to try and mend.....

The book will be in substance the very same, but very many pages, and a multitude of single sentences, will be different." A third edition of the *Essays* was published in the summer of 1806. It contained a few small alterations: the bulk of the corrections had been inserted in the preceding edition. In 1805 the subject of our sketch mentions that, "I am now beginning an *Essay on the Improvement of Time*, for which I have thrown together a large quantity of rude material, and which I foresee cannot be finished in less than a moderate volume. The subject suits me much, and I hope, if well, I may be able to finish it by the end of the year." He seems to have worked at this essay at intervals during the two following years, and at last to have abandoned it, in consequence of his becoming a regular contributor to the *Eclectic Review*. "So fully," says Mr. Ryland, "was he occupied in this department of literature, that upwards of thirteen years elapsed before he again appeared before the public in his own name."

A swelling of one of the glands of the neck now threatened to put a stop to all public speaking on Foster's part. He determined to resign his pastoral charge, and rely for support on his pen. The *Eclectic Review* presented a fair field for his energies, and his first critical essay—a review of *Car's Stranger in Ireland*—appeared in that periodical towards the close of 1806. In

the following year he contributed no fewer than thirteen articles to the same publication. The